

9. **Priority Populations under WIOA.** Services provided to adults and dislocated workers under title I of WIOA can be a pathway to the middle class and to maintain and build skills to remain in the middle class. Across all titles, WIOA focuses on serving "individuals with barriers to employment", defined in WIOA section 3(24) and seeks to ensure access to quality services for these populations. The WIOA Final Rules discuss priority and special populations for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs at 20 CFR 680.600 through .660. These populations are discussed below:

Individuals with Barriers to Employment

The populations included in the "individuals with barriers to employment" in WIOA sec. 3(24) include:

- (a) Displaced homemakers (as defined in WIOA sec. (16));
- (b) Low-income individuals (as defined in WIOA. 36));
- (c) Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians (as defined in WIOA sec. 66(b));
- (d) Individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities (as defined in WIOA sec. 3(25) (includes individuals who are in receipt of Social Security Disability Insurance);
- (e) Older individuals (age 55 and older) (as defined in WIOA sec. 3(39));
- (f) Ex-offenders ("offender" as defined in WIOA sec. 3(38));
- (g) Homeless individuals or homeless children and youths (see Attachment III);
- (h) Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system;
- (i) Individuals who are:
 - (1) English language learners (WIOA sec. 203(7)),
 - (2) Individuals who have low levels of literacy (an individual is unable to compute or solve programs, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, or in the individual's family, or in society); and
 - (3) Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers;
- (j) Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers (as defined in WIOA sec. 167(i)(1-3);
- (k) Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime TANF eligibility;
- (l) Single parents (including single pregnant women);
- (m) Long-term unemployed individuals (unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks); and
- (n) Such other groups as the Governor involved determines to have barriers to employment.

Source: Training and Employment Guidance Letter WIOA No. 19-16, March 1, 2017